

WILSON BROADBAND AVAILABILITY

By Lester Durbin

WRRRA is presently involved in trying to gain better broadband availability in Wilson. Many residents would be well aware of the poor access and in some cases a complete lack of any broadband service, both ADSL and for some, even wireless.

The problem for ADSL cable availability is a shortage of 'slots' at the Cannington Exchange and substandard cabling in parts of the suburb. Wireless in many cases can be an alternative but many find it too costly. You may recall in our Summer Newsletter we asked for feedback on the matter and I have to say that the response was disappointing. As a follow up, 3 streets were targeted with a detailed questionnaire which resulted in a very pleasing response—thank you.

This data has been passed on to Joe Delle Donne, Mayor City of Canning, Bill Johnston MLA Cannington and Steve Irons MP for Swan to whom it has been forwarded in Canberra. All mentioned have been most supportive and our submission has reached Telstra. May I note too that **WRRRA**'s efforts over this subject received a special mention in Bill Johnston's Inaugural speech in State Parliament last November and we are led to believe that users can expect an improvement in the future.

RETAINING WALLS - WHAT DO WE EXPECT FROM OUR COUNCIL?

We feel it is appropriate to make residents aware of the restrictions placed on their properties, and the difficulties involved in attempting to resolve issues arising from neighbouring property developments, once approval has been issued by Council, **AS UNDER WEST AUSTRALIAN LAW, THERE IS NO THIRD PARTY RIGHT OF APPEAL AGAINST SUCH DECISIONS.** This also applies to decisions that are contrary to the acceptable provisions of the R Codes, such as overlooking and errors by the developer and Council in accessing minimal building setbacks, once approved.

In an issue brought to our attention when Canning City, without consultation or notice of any nature, approved an infill development on a narrow block which involved excavations of up to 1.8 and 2.7m deep and the subsequent construction of retaining walls on the neighbouring boundary properties, on a 'first in best dressed basis', with the neighbours left to bear the consequences.

Retaining walls, or deep swimming pools on boundaries, are approved by Council, on the basis that the walls be designed to support the loadings that exist at the time. Thus frequently non-load bearing wall(s) place a restrictive, and non-advised caveat on neighbouring lands are approved by your Council. This unadvised caveat effectively restricts the neighbours' rights to build any structure, or even a driveway, within a distance from these walls that is equal to the height of the non load bearing wall unless the neighbour, at his cost, undertakes to construct expensive deep footings to prevent any future loadings being placed against the developer's wall.

Due to Council reluctance to advise affected neighbours of these restrictions, **WRRRA** has asked Council for the address of all properties within the Wilson, where one metre or higher non-load bearing retaining wall(s) have been constructed. We also ask that any resident, who has had a retaining wall of this nature constructed on their boundary to contact us through our e-mail address, so that we may establish, through Council records, whether or not you have a restriction on future use of your land.

In considering the above instance and complaints from others over time, there is a very strong need for Council to review and amend their current practice and approval procedures and to ensure that the amenities and quiet enjoyment of neighbouring properties is protected and appropriately considered when approving future developments.

In reporting on this instance we would like to acknowledge the work undertaken by our Ward Councillors in assisting to resolve these issues.

KENT STREET WEIR PRECINCT

By Rob Marshall

WRRRA supports the City of Canning in their endeavour to upgrade the Kent Street Weir Precinct sensitive environmental features, passive recreation facilities, landscaping, the iconic weir bridge, underground power and parking. **WRRRA** is encouraged by the desire and support of Mayor, Mr. Joe Delle Donne, the Mason Ward councillors and the Cannington MLA, Mr. Bill Johnston who are committed to relocating the Council Works Depot and rectifying the contaminated land. We understand that progress has been slow over the last year due to the change in the City administration and economic issues.

WRRRA is awaiting a response from the City about our proposal to remove the perimeter fence from the Wilson Park recreation area to allow easier public access. This proposal has the support of the Mayor and Cllrs. Barry and Kelly. It is suggested such improvements for the area be included in the presentation of the 'Plan for the Future' due in 2010.